

RTS-HK-AD285J

TOP SECRET

SITUATION ROOM

70 NOV 26 PM 7:00

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TOP SECRET 262216Z NOV 73 SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY  
VIA CAR CHANNELS  
FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER  
TO: AMBASSADOR GUNKER  
CITE: WHS7767  
DELIVER AT OPENING OF BUSINESS

THE PRESIDENT HAS ASKED ABOUT FEASIBILITY OF OUR OFFERING THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ALL NORTH VIETNAMESE POWS HELD IN SOUTH VIETNAM IN RETURN FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF ALL U.S. PRISONERS HELD IN NORTH VIETNAM. HE RECOGNIZES THAT THIS PARTICULAR FORMULATION COULD POSE PROBLEMS FOR THIEU AND GVN. BUT BELIEVES PROPAGANDA VALUE OF SUCH A PROPOSAL COULD HAVE BENEFICIAL IMPACT AS:

- CONTINUATION OF FAVORABLE MOMENTUM ON POW ISSUE;
- DEMONSTRATION OF GVN GENEROSITY IN BEHALF OF U.S. POWS; AND
- IF REJECTED, AS IT PROBABLY WOULD BE, COULD SERVE AS AS FURTHER MANIFESTATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE INTRANSIGENCE ON POW ISSUE.

THIS PROPOSAL WAS MENTIONED BY VICE PRESIDENT KY TO PRESIDENT DURING THEIR BREAKFAST MEETING ON NOVEMBER 24. KY SUGGESTED THIEU MIGHT REACT FAVORABLY.

PRESIDENT WISHES YOU TO DISCUSS PROPOSAL EXCLUSIVELY WITH THIEU AND PROVIDE RESPONSE AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE VIA THIS CHANNEL. IF THIEU'S RESPONSE AND YOUR OWN JUDGEMENT FAVOR PROPOSAL, I WILL FORMALLY PROCESS THROUGH REGULAR CHANNELS WITH VIEW TOWARDS EARLIEST IMPLEMENTATION. IN THE INTERIM EXISTENCE OF THIS PROPOSAL SHOULD BE RESTRICTED EXCLUSIVELY TO YOU AND PRESIDENT THIEU.

WARMEST REGARDS.  
BHICII STNAJOLGYPRVEL

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE  
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

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Ky suggested Thieu might react favorably.

President wishes you to discuss proposal exclusively with Thieu and provide response as soon as practicable